

BUDGET / FACILITIES SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING

MINUTES

Monday, January 18, 2011

Oliver Administration Building

Present

Subcommittee: William O'Dell (Chair), John Bento and Diana Campbell

School Committee, Administration and Staff: Marjorie McBride, Susan Rancourt (7:05), John Saviano, Melinda Thies, Mario Andrade and Pauline Silva

Bill O'Dell called the meeting to order at 6:40 PM.

Approval of Minutes

MOTION: Diana Campbell motioned to approve the minutes to the December 13, 2010 and January 10, 2011 meetings. John Bento seconded. The motion passed by a vote of 3 to 0.

Budget Update FY 2011

Pauline had nothing remarkable to report; we are on target for a positive fund balance. Diana asked for guidance on reviewing the warrants. Melinda and Pauline scrutinize the entries; the warrants are given to the Subcommittee for informational purposes but any questions or concerns should be addressed to Pauline.

Budget Development – Staffing History

Pauline distributed a report on staffing numbers from FY 06 through FY 11 (attached). During this time we reduced our staff by 61 positions, or 18.899%. The increase in the “others” category is two behavior specialists paid from ARRA funds. The Committee asked that Pauline also provide %age decrease by year by classification and a separate line graph report for teachers.

Regarding the impact of these changes on students, Melinda explained that up to this time, we have used restructuring of staff so that all teachers now teach a full load and this has allowed us to preserve programs; however, we have exhausted this option and we have to look at cutting programs to meet the budget. This information needs to be stressed to the legislators and the public. The bottom line is we have done all we can to meet the shortfall; support is needed from the taxpayers to continue to provide an excellent education for our children. We must point out that unlike other districts, we carry our own debt service. The conversation with the Commissioner on January 31 will focus on the funding formula.

Melinda and Pauline are meeting this week with Carolyn Dias of RIDE about the funding formula; Carolyn has been a supporter of the District.

Funding Formula

Pauline presented the latest information on the funding formula (attached); we are facing a \$704,504 reduction each year for the next 10 years. The reduction in the first year could be reduced to \$223,673 if the “Categorical Funding” (Career & Technical, Early Childhood, High Cost Special Needs, Transportation, Regional Bonus) items listed on page 3 are actually funded. Pauline has been instructed to plan on a 5% reduction in state funding.

Meeting Format

Bill asked the Committee’s opinion on the new meeting format saying he felt the necessity to change things due to the sidebar conversations, off topic conversations and length of the meetings. Diana felt the location of the facilities focused meeting before the School Committee workshop in the Mt. Hope cafeteria needs to be changed to a quieter space. Marj felt that would remove the group from the happenings in the cafeteria. Bill will change the room and begin the meetings at 6:40 PM; any facilities topics requiring long discussion will be addressed at the regular Budget meeting.

Next Meeting

All are anxious to begin strategizing for Joint Finance. Melinda and John Bento are developing a plan. This Subcommittee agreed to have a special meeting on February 9, 6:30 PM to begin Joint Finance discussion and planning.

The Subcommittee will approve the budget at their February 22 meeting, to go to the full Committee on February 28.

Adjournment

MOTION: At 7:52 PM Diana Campbell motioned to adjourn. John Bento seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

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